



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
550 S. VERMONT AVE., LOS ANGELES, CA 90020 HTTP://DMH.LACOUNTY.GOV



MARVIN J. SOUTHARD, D.S.W.
Director

ROBIN KAY, Ph.D.
Chief Deputy Director

RODERICK SHANER, M.D.
Medical Director

August 13, 2013

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Marvin J. Southard, D.S.W.
Director

SUBJECT: **REPORT ON AGREEMENT WITH THE CALIFORNIA MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION (CMHDA)**

During the July 30, 2013, meeting, your Board instructed the Director of Mental Health, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer, to report back on the unique provisions of CMHDA. As directed, this report will provide you with information regarding the unique services provided by CMHDA and other pertinent information outlining why the Department of Mental Health (DMH) requires a sole source contract with this organization.

CMHDA is a non-profit organization that represents the mental health directors from each of California's 58 counties, as well as Berkeley and the Tri-City area. Initially established in 1958 as the Conference of Local Mental Health Directors, the original mission of CMHDA was to provide consultation to the State Director of Mental Health in establishing standards, rules, and regulations for community mental health programs. The role of CMHDA was later codified in various statutory provisions of California's Welfare and Institutions Code, requiring, for example, that the State Department of Health Care Services must consult with CMHDA in order to adopt standards for the approval of mental health services.

On July 30, DMH requested Board authorization to enter into a sole source consultant services agreement with CMHDA for several services including: advocacy with State leaders regarding delivery of mental health services, technical assistance in the planning and implementation of Mental Health Services Act programs, and assistance with the implementation of the Educational Arts Therapy Programs delivered in collaboration with the Department of Probation in the juvenile halls and camps. Justification for the sole source agreement is provided for each of these components below.

- **Advocacy.** CMHDA is an affiliate of the California State Association of Counties. It is the only statewide organization whose purpose is to advocate on behalf of county mental health departments with the Legislature, state agencies, other governmental organizations (including the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability

Commission, the California Mental Health Planning Council, etc.). Participation in CMHDA enables the priorities, issues and positions of Los Angeles County to be included in the recommendations made to various State entities responsible for mental health legislation and funding. Conversely, should Los Angeles County DMH withdraw from participation, the recommendations and policy directions taken by the Administration and the legislature could fail to consider the important – and sometimes unique – issues faced in delivering mental health services in the largest and most diverse county in California.

- **Technical Assistance.** Through its committees and workgroups (e.g., Medi-Cal Policy Committee, Health Reform Workgroup, Adult and Children's System of Care Committees) CMHDA provides considerable technical assistance to the counties. Given the complexity of emerging issues such as health reform implementation and the rapidity with which county mental health departments must often address issues, DMH benefits from the unique ability of CMHDA to quickly identify and retain the services of consultants with specialized knowledge that can provide technical assistance through these committees and workgroups. In addition, due to economy of scale and the ability to share the costs of these services among the California counties participation in CMHDA results in cost savings to Los Angeles County.
- **Educational Arts Therapy Programs.** This program supports the rehabilitation programming currently provided in the Probation Department's juvenile detention facilities. As the Department of Justice (DOJ) reviewed Probation's Juvenile halls and camps, the DOJ has been supportive of the continuation of this program because it is beneficial to the clinical continuity of care to clients at the probation camps. A recently-completed UCLA study found that this program contributes to the well-being of mental health clients in detention. The removal of this program will have negative consequences to the ongoing treatment of mental health clients in the halls and camps. The initial agreement with CMHDA was established at a time when the entity was the sole vehicle available for the delivery of these services, and this agreement enables DMH to ensure continuity of this intervention during this Fiscal Year. However, during Fiscal Year 2013-14, DMH intends to initiate a solicitation for these services.

If you desire additional information regarding this Agreement, please contact me, or your staff may contact Dr. Robin Kay, Chief Deputy Director, at (213) 738-4108.

MJS:RK:tld

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Chief Executive Office
Mental Health Deputies
Robin Kay, Ph.D.